Free Overseas Ticket Scheme by IA

1227. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:
SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines floated a scheme between July 1st to September 30, 1999 wherein anyone catching seven domestic flights would be entitled to one free ticket on an international sector while those with ten flights would get two free Overseas tickets;

(b) if so, what was the response of the scheme;

(c) the number of free tickets issued; and

(d) the estimated profit/loss incurred by IA as a result of this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The response to the scheme was good and approximately 17,000 free tickets were issued.

(d) The scheme contributed to the airlines profitability. The profitability of the airline during three months prior to the introduction of the scheme (April-June, 1999) and during the 6 months, including three months period of the scheme (April-September, 1999), *vis-a-vis* comparable period in the previous year (1998-99) was as follows:—

	April to June	April to September
Budget 1999-2000	+22.81 crores	- 1.61 crores
Actual 1999-2000	+ 0.45 crores	+ 6.15 crores
Actual 1998-99	+ 8.35 crores	- 34.90 crores

Commencement of International Air Services from Kochin Airport

1228. SHRI A VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposals from foreign Airlines for starting services from Kochin Airport in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government will give permission to foreign Airlines to start service from Kochin Airport?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Requests have been received from the Governments of UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Sri Lanka, Republic of Yemen and Austria for grant of Cochin as a point of call for their designated airlines.

(c) So far, Cochin has not been granted as a point of call to any foreign airline. International services are, however, operated out of Cochin Airport by Air India and Indian Airlines.

Setting up of New Domestic and International Airports

1229. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to set up some new domestic and international Airports;

(b) if so, the number of new Airports proposed to be set up during Ninth Plan; and

(c) the places identified for the location of these new Airports?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Two new airports are under construction at Tura in Meghalaya and Kargil in Jammu & Kashmir. The Government has approved in principle setting up of a new airport of international standards in joint venture at Bangalore.

Detention of Hijacked IA Plane At Amritsar Airport

1230. SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the release of three terrorists in exchange of passengers of a hijacked Indian Airlines plane has sent a wrong signal to the terrorists and set a bad precedent;

(b) whether the aircraft could have been detained at Amritsar by more effective strategy and operation of the Crisis Management Group; and

(c) what steps Government contemplated to avoid such incidents in future?